

**REMARKS**

By this amendment, claim 4 has been amended. Claim 11 has been cancelled. Claims 1-10 remain in the application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications.

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The specification has been amended to include the term “configuration,” which merely clarifies the existing term, “construction,” and is therefore not new matter. Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection of claims 1-11 be withdrawn.

Claims 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. The Office Action contends that the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 4 recites a “machine-implemented parts selection supporting method.” Thus, the claim recites a machine-implemented process with a practical application in the technological arts and does not merely recite an abstract idea. *See* M.P.E.P. § 2106. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 as amended recites patentable and statutory subject matter. Claims 5-6 depend from claim 4 and are patentable at least for the reasons mentioned above. Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kiriara et al. (US 5,339,247). Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a “configuration display data generating means for reading out product configuration data from said product configuration storage means and displaying a list of parts forming a product or a partial assembly input by an operator.” Kiriara et al. does not disclose this limitation. Kiriara et al. discloses “the

server WS 1 reads (sic) out both of the tables 33 and 34 from the file 301 and stores into its own main memory 1a." Col. 4, ln. 20-22. There is no configuration display data generating means. Since Kirihaara et al. does not disclose all the limitations of claim 1, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2 and 3 are not anticipated by Kirihaara et al.

Claims 4, 7, and 10 recite, *inter alia*, a "configuration display data generation step of reading out product configuration data from product configuration storage means storing parts configuration of a product and displaying a list of parts forming the product or a partial assembly input by an operator." Kirihaara et al. does not disclose this limitation. Kirihaara et al. discloses "the server WS 1 reads (sic) out both of the tables 33 and 34 from the file 301 and stores into its own main memory 1a." Col. 4, ln. 20-22. There is no configuration display data generation step. Since Kirihaara et al. does not disclose all the limitations of claims 4, 7, and 10, claims 4, 7, and 10 are not anticipated by Kirihaara et al. Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 4 and are patentable at least for the reasons mentioned above. Claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 7 and are patentable at least for the reasons mentioned above.

In Figure 1 of Kirihaara et al., parts construction file 301, referred to in the Office Action as "product configuration storing means," is the same item as product construction database 101 in Figure 1 of the present invention. However, the parts classification storing means (Kirihaara et al. Figure 1, distributed parts shape file 201) according to Kirihaara et al. is a file of parts shapes, which is different from the "parts classification database" in the present invention. The parts shape file defined in Kirihaara et al. is a memory of graphic data that represent geometric shapes of parts collected therein. In contrast to this, the "parts classification database" defined in the present invention is a relational database of organized sets of information that represents category of each part accommodated therein as well as its hierarchical super-

sub-relationship among various parts. Therefore, the graphic data and the parts classification database are different.

In addition to the above, it is pointed out that the Figure 2 of Kiri-hara et al. shows that their parts configuration is a tree style. This tree style is applied commonly to any other parts configuration data and is the same style as in the present invention. In terms of the parts configuration data however, what is disclosed in Kiri-hara et al. is an algorithm only for retrieving child-parts from the parts configuration data as shown in Figure 4. Figure 4 of Kiri-hara et al. indicates an idea partly common to FIG. 5 of the present invention; however, the present invention is different from the patent in that the command for retrieving the respective category from the parts classification database is embedded in the results-display on the screen as shown in the step 502 in Figure 5. Kiri-hara et al., in addition to the above, discloses an algorithm for retrieving child-parts based on parent-parts as shown in Figure 5. However, this does not necessarily mean that the patent has disclosed such an algorithm that parent-parts are fetched to display a reversely developed configuration tree as shown in the step 905 in FIG. 11 of the present invention. Consequently, features stated above leads to the fact that the present invention is different from the art in Kiri-hara et al. in terms of structure of the art and construction of algorithm steps.

These differences of the present invention enables the system or the method to retrieve parts of the same type and those products in which parts of the same type are involved. Therefore, the present invention definitely provides inventive and patentable steps. Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1-10 be withdrawn.

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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